

**Environmental Restoration (ER) Project
Cerro Grande Fire
Accelerated Action Information Sheet**

**Potential Release Site (PRS) 02-009(a)
Non-intentional Release**

Technical Area (TA)-2, located in Los Alamos Canyon, housed several reactors, including the Omega West and Water Boiler Reactors. The reactors were shutdown, removed from the nuclear facilities list, and placed into the Laboratory's Decontamination and Decommissioning program.

PRS History: PRS 02-009(a) consists of an area of radioactive soil contamination located above a boulder, south of the fence corner behind Structure 2-50. It was identified during the decommissioning of several buildings at TA-2 in 1986, when a survey uphill of the boulder was conducted and contamination was detected. Contaminants of potential concern are those associated with operations at the Water Boiler Reactor, and include technetium-99, strontium-90, iodine-131, and cesium-137. Field screening was conducted in 1995. Results showed no detectable concentrations of organic chemicals and no alpha activity above instrument background. Beta/gamma activity was elevated slightly above instrument background.

PRS 02-009(a) is listed on the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments module to the Laboratory's Hazardous Waste Facility permit. The ER Project has not proposed the site for no further action. ER Project personnel do not know the extent of the contamination because only surface samples have been taken.

Issues of Concern: The area upstream of PRS 02-009(a) burned during the Cerro Grande fire. The intensity of upstream burn

was low to moderate. The soil surface at the site is contaminated, and there is potential for



erosion or scouring. There is no debris on the site that could enter the flood watercourse.

There are no structures that could interfere with or be impacted by flood mitigation efforts.

Accelerated Action Status: PRS 02-009(a) was evaluated after the Cerro Grande fire. Accelerated corrective actions are in progress. A surface radiation survey, conducted in August 2000, identified four contaminated sites. The site was excavated in October 2000. Twice as much of soil as was estimated was removed because of the depth and extent of contamination. ER Project personnel collected 11 verification samples; the data has not yet been validated or reviewed. In October 2000, two additional radioactively contaminated areas were found, approximately 40 feet east of the PRS. The area has been roped off and posted as a contaminated area.

Related Documents:

"TA-2 Water Boiler Reactor Decommissioning (Phase I)," LANL Report LA-10890-MS, October 1986.

"Solid Waste Management Units Reports," Vol. I of IV (TA-0 through TA-9) LANL Report LA-UR-90-3400, revised November 1990.

"RFI Work Plan for Operable Unit 1098 (TA-2, 41)," LANL Report LA-UR-92-3825, June 1993.